



## News Release

For Immediate Release:  
January 7, 2004  
Media Contact:  
Stephen P. McDonald  
Public Information Office  
801-538-7099

### **Vital Records Treasures Found In New Report**

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Utah continues to outpace the rest of the country when it comes to having babies. A new Utah Department of Health report shows Utah's fertility rate is 91.2 births per 1,000 women 15-44 years of age compared with the U.S. rate of 64.8.

The report, **Utah's Vital Statistics: Births and Deaths, 2002**, offers 100 pages of information that serves as a critical resource for business leaders, educators, government agencies and the general public.

Here's a sample of what you can find in the report. In 2002:

- There were 49,140 births and 13,042 deaths among residents of Utah.
- 270 Utah babies died before their first birthday. That's a rate of 5.5 deaths for every 1,000 live births, a testament to the astronomical improvements in health care since the 1950s, when 25 of every 1,000 infants died in their first year of life.
- Davis County babies were healthier than those in other parts of the state. The report shows the infant mortality rate in Davis County was 2.7, about half that of the state overall.
- The birthing process is also safer today than ever before: In 1940, 36 mothers died in childbirth. In 2002, two mothers died during delivery. The fact that Utah's population today is more than four times larger than in 1940 makes this fact even more meaningful.
- There were 104.8 males born for every 100 females in Utah. The ratio was nearly the same in the U.S. during 2001.

- MORE -

## **Page 2 of 2 -- Vital Records Treasures Found in New Report**

- There were 52,687 pregnancies that resulted in 49,140 live births, 247 fetal deaths, and 3,300 abortions.
- Nearly 8,400 babies were born to unmarried mothers.
- There were 3,261 babies (6.6 per 1,000 births) born under 2,500 grams or 5.5 pounds, defined as low birth weight. The U.S. low birth weight rate was 7.8.

“The 2002 report has much more than just 2002 data,” said Jeffrey Duncan, director of the Office of Vital Records and Statistics, Utah Department of Health. “The report contains statistics from as far back as 1940 so that you can see trends and compare changes over time.”

Also significant is the report’s listing of the top 10 causes of death for Utah residents:

- 1 - Diseases of the heart cause (22.7%)
- 2 - Cancer (18.1%)
- 3 - Strokes
- 4 - Unintentional injuries
- 5 - Chronic lower respiratory diseases
- 6 - Diabetes
- 7 - Influenza and pneumonia
- 8 - Suicide
- 9 - Alzheimer’s disease
- 10 - Kidney disease

These birth and death data provide only a glimpse of the information available in the annual report, now available on the Utah Department of Health Office of Vital Records and Statistics web site at [www.health.utah.gov/vitalrecords](http://www.health.utah.gov/vitalrecords). The report can also be found at the state's depository libraries at universities and in the public library system.

# # #

*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*